DOCTOR WHO

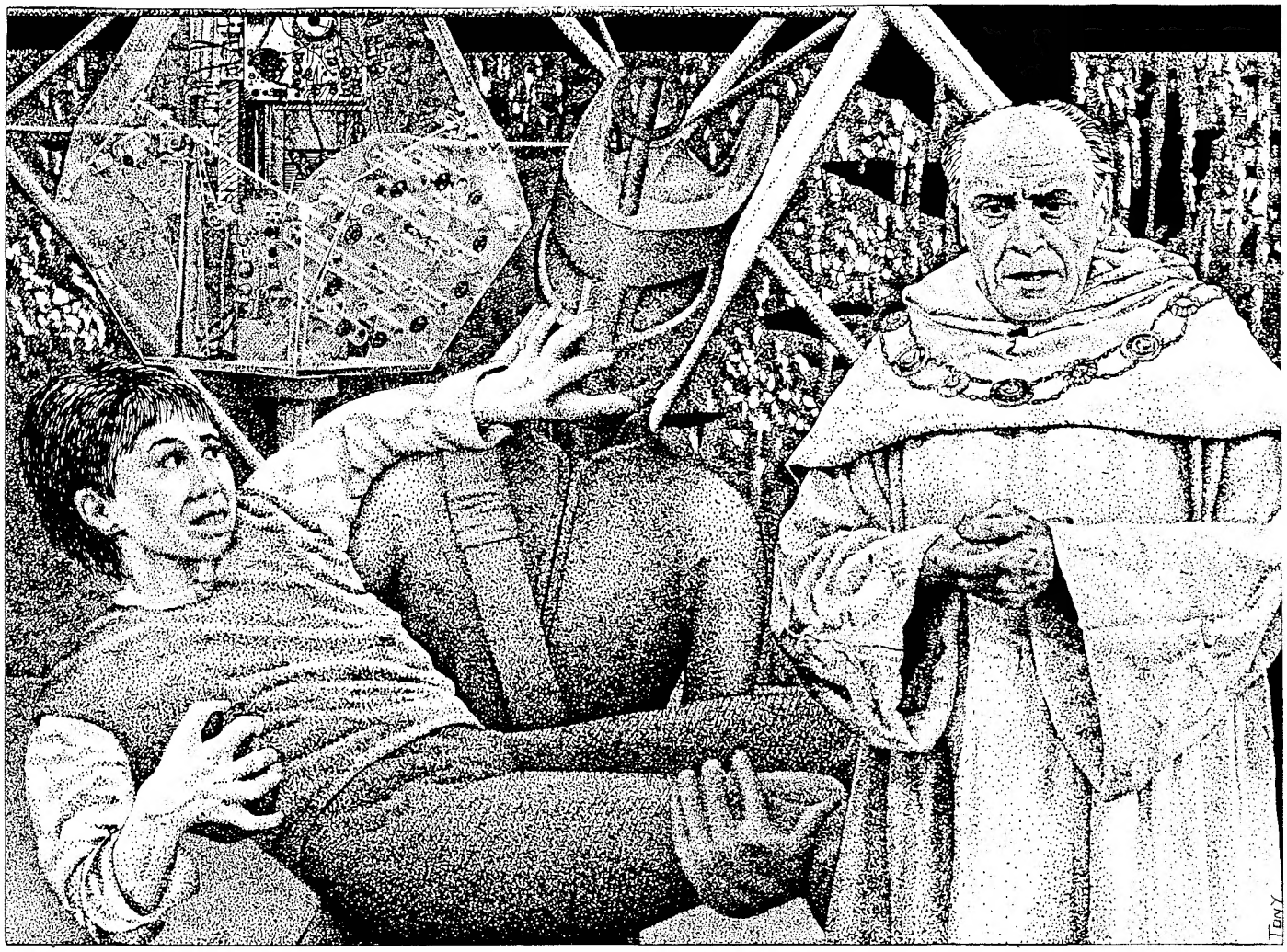
SERIAL E

THE KEYS OF MARINUS

BY TERRY NATION

An Adventure in Space & Time

DOCTOR WHO — AN ADVENTURE IN SPACE AND TIME



"Useless lies!" Yartek's vaguely oriental tones spat out the words as he perceived Sabetha's attempt at deception. "Where is the final key?"

Held captive in the cruel grip of a Voord warrior, Sabetha's voice held no fear as she answered the white-robed figure hovering between her and the bound, seated person of Altos. "I'll never tell you. Never!"

Yartek pondered a moment, his devious mind assimilating the evidence of the relationship between the man and the girl. His webbed glove shot out and pointed at Altos. "This man is no servant. He travelled with you. He is in love with you. I think he will tell me."

Sabetha averted her eyes, but answered levelly. "The man who loves me cannot betray me."

The black mask of their captor tilted back slightly, the light from the glowing Conscience machine reflecting off the perspex eye shields, adding to the creature's inscrutable demeanour. "The man who loves you cannot condemn you to death!" Yartek turned and knelt beside Altos's chair. He indicated the fragile form of Sabetha.

"I can promise you one thing," he began, his voice quiet, but filled with latent menace, "if you do not tell me where the final key is, I shall order my creatures to kill her!"

Altos swallowed hard. The enslavement of his planet by these dark beings, or the callous execution of the one he loved. No choice could be more terrible, and the reply mirrored his despair. "The man who was with us - the Doctor - he has it..."

The Voord leader rose. Only a frail old man now stood between him and the power he had for so long craved. Silently the warrior guarding Altos drew its knife and left to complete the final task in Yartek's quest...

('The Keys of Marinus' - 16th. May 1964)

STORY FIVE
'THE KEYS OF MARINUS'

The TARDIS arrived on a bleak, desolate island surrounded by a sea of acid. Only moments before, a quartet of torpedo-shaped, one-man submersibles had also come to rest upon the glass sands. These were the Voord, and this was their latest assault upon the island which housed the 'Conscience' of the planet Marinus. The four time travellers had split up, and before long Susan came across a huge pyramidal city. However, her movements were being closely watched by the Voord warriors...

Soon afterwards, the Doctor, Ian and Barbara also discovered the city, having escaped the clutches of two of the sinister, black-clad creatures. Eventually the four friends were reunited before Arbitan, who introduced himself as the Keeper of the Conscience of Marinus. He explained that the function of the Conscience machine was to erase all the baser humanoid emotions such as greed, violence and hatred from the minds of the people of Marinus. Its purpose was to encourage peace and tranquility. But the mysterious Voord, led by Yartek, had developed an immuniser which gave them an instant superiority over the now pacifist people of Marinus. To prevent the Conscience falling into the hands of the Voord, four of the five micro-keys vital to the operation of the machine had been removed and scattered across the face of the planet. Many people had since been despatched to bring the keys back to Arbitan, but none had ever returned. Now, with the arrival of the Doctor and his companions, there was fresh hope.

During their quest for the four keys, the travellers ran the gauntlet of all the terrors Marinus had to offer. They first arrived in the domain of the Morpho, where grotesque brain-creatures held them captive. Barbara destroyed the brains, and the travellers were joined by Sabetha (Arbitan's daughter) and her lover, Altos.

The Doctor moved ahead now to the site of the fourth key in the capital city, Millenius, whilst the others moved on to an area where Nature had turned against Man. After retrieving a false key, set in the head of a stone idol, Ian and Barbara found the genuine second key in the plant-besieged laboratory of the scientist Darrius. They next found themselves in the snowy wastes of Marinus and, after an encounter with the salacious hermit Vasor and the reanimated Ice Soldiers who guarded the third key, the whole reunited group moved on to their rendezvous with the Doctor in Millenius. However, Ian was framed for murder, and the final key hidden. The Doctor helped to uncover the real murderer, and all the keys were gathered together.

Their quest completed, they returned to the island, now ruled by Yartek. Realising this, Ian handed him the false key. When brought into operation with the real keys, this had the devastating effect of blowing up the Conscience, destroying the Voord with it.

DOCTOR WHO - AN ADVENTURE IN SPACE AND TIME

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STORY REVIEW

THE CONSCIENCE MACHINE

Every season, no matter how good, has its low point, and 'The Keys of Marinus' can be said to be the 'low point' of the first season. Had it not been sandwiched between two brilliant historical stories, perhaps the flaws would not have been so obvious; but flaws it did have, and for me they marred what was basically an experiment with a new format.

Each of the episodes at this time was limited to six sets, and this story was an attempt to use this factor by having each episode centred around six different sets, linked by the theme of collecting the four concealed keys to operate the Conscience machine of Marinus. Unfortunately this otherwise clever idea was hampered by the problem of telling a relatively entire story in less than the space of each twenty-five minute episode. To me the strength of the early 'Doctor Who' stories was the graphic skill of the authors and actors in creating realistic characters, with whom one could become involved, and for whom one could be concerned. Kal, Alydon, Marco Polo...and, not least, the four travellers themselves. In 'The Keys of Marinus' there simply wasn't the time for any character to become established long enough for this to work. Of all the secondary characters, Sabetha and Altos appeared the most, but they were very skimpily drawn, virtually shoved out of the stories to allow Ian to be the hero.

The segment of the story in Morphoton ("The Velvet Web") was especially well drawn. One of its highlights, in a humorous vein, was that marvellous sequence where the Doctor picks up a tin mug, under the impression it's a priceless piece of scientific machinery. In all seriousness he exclaims: "If I can have instruments like these, I might be able to overcome the fault in the time mechanism aboard the ship!" However, the concept of animate brains, kept alive by life-support units and hypnotising everyone is really very Flash Gordon-type material, and the whole episode had that same air of unreality about it. The ultimate flaw took place when Barbara hit a glass brain-tank that should have broken, but didn't! Still, the brains themselves were suitably impressive and eerie, although one is left with the distinct feeling a great deal more could have been done with them.

The "Screaming Jungle" episode had some very nice touches, the climax being the attack on Ian and Barbara by the accelerated plants; a scene superbly photographed and directed, with a genuine air of mounting panic injected into it. However, the earlier part of the episode, featuring the concealed mantraps and Darrius' corny death-scene, was rather unconvincing.

The "Snows of Terror" episode with Vasor...Well, it was fine in places, particularly when the trapper attempted to rape Barbara (That would never pass today's censors!), but the ice-cave sequence was a trifle forced and convenient. The grim, silent Ice Soldiers, though, were splendid. I just wish the dialogue for this portion of the journey had been a little better!

The highlight of the tale, however, was the magnificent trial of Ian Chesterton in the capital city, Millenius, the trial sequences being both atmospheric and tense. The denouement was well handled, the Doctor clowning a little, but with his usual arrogant and (inevitably!) triumphant manner. The concept, taken from the point of view that one is guilty until proven innocent, gave the final two episodes of 'The Keys of Marinus' that much-needed boost, although Terry Nation had evidently had problems with what to do with all the incidental characters. Tarron, the Investigator, was played superbly

by Henley Thomas, and became a sympathetic and impotent aid for the travellers, locked within the laws of the city, unable to free Ian from an ingeniously framed charge of murder.

The parts of the serial set on the island housing the Conscience of Marinus probably fared the worst. Backdrops that were obviously backdrops, the exterior of the Citadel which was patently false, and the Voord...

To me, the biggest problem with these aliens was the fact they were totally under-used. For main villains, all told, we saw them for about twenty minutes. They had no chance to be anything else but heavies, which was a pity because Yartek showed signs of being a possible villain of distinction. One who can scheme and plan, and yet one not lacking in subtlety and patience. In fact, from the end of episode one through to mid-episode six we never even saw the Voord, and scant reference was made of them. Although they did look rather like men in scuba-diving gear, with an improvised mask over their heads, this didn't detract from their overall appearance. They were supposed to be men in protective suits. Evidently, the designers had been presented with a problem. Find an alien costume, make it look menacing, allow the actors freedom of movement, but make sure it doesn't cost the Earth...

Other problems abounded. Marinus, somehow, possesses Earth-type wolves - a trifle hard to accept. For people who had had lives ruled by the Conscience for so long, they seemed remarkably violent-minded, especially Arbitan and Darrius (two of the Keepers), who were as blood-thirsty a pair as any...Subtlety of plot is, it seems, of necessity lacking, and a lot of the time the plot is transparently obvious and the dialogue trite. When Susan tells Aydan they know where the key is, he almost admits his guilt and then quickly recovers...Darrius gasps out a clue to the hiding place of the key he guards with his last breath (evidently forgetting that he hasn't had any proof that Ian and Barbara had been sent by Arbitan).

There were, happily, some good points. Ray Cusick managed a remarkable and altogether excellent job on the massive variety of different sets, down to the smallest detail. The technical effects were largely well handled, although the TARDIS materialisation was jerky - but this was the very first visual materialisation - and the travel dials (worn on each traveller's wrist) was worked by a very clumsy split-screen technique.

In another season, perhaps the flaws would have seemed less conspicuous, or even bothersome; but in such a season as this, where the previous and following serials were so superb, they couldn't possibly be overlooked. The story was fast, exciting and novel, but simply wasn't the style for the show. 'Doctor Who' works better with one single concept for a story, allowed full reign, and with detailed and believable characters. Upon reflection, these things were precisely what 'The Keys of Marinus' lacked.

WRITTEN BY JOHN PEEL

THE VOORD

WRITTEN BY :

JEREMY BENTHAM

Few aliens, if any, possess the same degree of mystery as the Voord. They appeared in only one and a half episodes of 'The Keys of Marinus', and for the greater part of their time on screen they were silent. Virtually nothing was revealed of their origins during the serial and not even Arbitan was familiar with their character, true purpose and motivation.

The greatest puzzle of all surrounds the form of the Voord themselves. It was made clear in the first episode that the black uniform they wore was a protection against the sea of acid surrounding the Conscience citadel. One of the uniforms had been flawed during the initial assault on the island and the creature inside had been dissolved, leaving only the protective suit behind for the four time travellers to find on their arrival. However, that did not answer the basic question of the actual shape of the alien inside. Was it humanoid, or did the webbed gloves, flippers and horned headmask indicate a creature more suited to a different environment than that of Arbitan's people?

The former argument would seem to be substantiated by the majority of inhabitants on Marinus. Darrius, Vasor, the Ice Soldiers and the inhabitants of Millenius were all very clearly human. In fact much of Marinus was like Earth, complete with wolves, fir forests, jungle villas and a legal system which used principles curiously akin to those which exist in France. Countering that, however, were the brain mutants of Morphoton. Their minds had outgrown the need for physical bodies, hence their existence as pure brain creatures, their only physical sense organs being a pair of stalked eyes.

The evidence of the script is also contrary in places. In the first episode Arbitan clearly refers to "A man called Yartek", who first discovered a way to immunise himself from the effects of the Conscience. Later though, during the final episode, the Voord leader refers to his subordinates as "my creatures".

The Voord appeared in the very first 'Doctor Who Annual' which was released for Christmas 1965. Reference was made there to the aerial-like protrusions that emerge from the Voord masks. In describing them, David Whitaker (the annual's author) made them out to be some kind of telepathic sense organ that communicated speech to a listener in his or her language. Again, as a counter to that theory, Yartek's mask possessed no such device - and yet he was the leader.

Voord technology is also a mystery. The glass submersibles used to cross the acid sea, where metal craft would corrode, point to a very sophisticated level of engineering. Yet for all that the only armaments carried by the Voord warriors were commando-style daggers. No guns or explosive devices were in evidence at all.

Evil, definitely. Ruthless and cunning, certainly; but other than these broad spectrum character assessments, the Voord remain today in the same category as they did in 1964 - a mystery.

TERRY NATION

ARTICLE COMPILED BY —

TIM ROBINS

"Life without the Daleks," admits Terry Nation ruefully, "has not been without problems. Their continued existence means that I find it impossible to write another successful monster into 'Doctor Who'".

Terry Nation, who was born in Cardiff, South Wales, agrees that the Daleks gave him his first "taste of fame". The story goes, however, that initially he turned down the opportunity to write for 'Doctor Who' due to other commitments. Then, at the eleventh hour, he found himself with no work and, "bribed by a large fee", he agreed to write for it after all.

His first serial for 'Doctor Who' was written in just one week (an episode a day), and introduced the Daleks. His reaction to the whole concept of 'Doctor Who' was that "There's no way this show can ever succeed". Much to his amazement, the show was succeeding, and particularly with the appearance of the Daleks. "And of course the BBC twigged it as well and they knew they had to change the direction that 'Doctor Who' was intended to go in."

Largely because of this "change of direction" Terry Nation was commissioned to script a six-episode science-fiction story, which became known as 'The Keys of Marinus'. This serial featured the Voord - a race of "spine-chilling creatures", as one journalist wrote. Although the Voord would never achieve the same popularity as the Daleks, at least 'The Keys of Marinus' set out to illustrate the flexibility of the 'Doctor Who' format, and pave the way for more science-fiction stories.

Something which is of great influence in many of his 'Doctor Who' scripts is Naziism. "The Daleks...represent...that unhearing, unthinking, blanked-out face of authority that will destroy you." His first 'Doctor Who' serial featured the aggressive Daleks in their attempt to "exterminate" the oppressed Thals, against the background of a scarred world. Here, obvious use is being made of racial conflict, with its references to our Second World War. The Daleks are the Nazis, the Thals are the Jews - a conflict which was summed up during the serial as "a dislike for the unlike".

The planet, lain waste by the foolishness of Man, is another theme for which Terry Nation has a particular preference. He was also responsible, in later years, for the BBCtv series 'Survivors', which followed the lives of a group of people after a pandemic disease had wiped out most of the world's population.

In 'The Keys of Marinus' we see again the sinister references to oppression and authoritarianism. The black uniforms of the inhabitants of the capital city of Millenius point to one thing. In his later 'Doctor Who' serials this factor (Nazi-style uniformity) is significantly present, presumably to echo the uniformity of the Daleks.

Dennis Spooner (one-time 'Doctor Who' Story Editor), who worked closely with Terry Nation for many years, says of him: "Of all the writers, he was one of the most experienced. There was always probably less to be done with Terry's scripts."

TECHNICAL OBSERVATIONS

The TARDIS was seen materialising on screen for the first time, although silently.

'The Keys of Marinus' contained the first extensive use of working models in 'Doctor Who'. The first episode featured the miniature TARDIS with flashing roof light; the island housing the Conscience a few miles off shore from the mainland; and the four Voord submersibles. Also, during one scene, a model was used of the central shaft of the Citadel, down which a Voord falls to his death in the acid sea.

The Voord masks were in two pieces. A hard skull cap that rose from the neck and enclosed the head, leaving two grilles either side for the actor to hear; and a rubberised face-mask that hooked under the actor's nose and was secured at the back by the pressure of the twin, horn-like structures that rose over and back behind the head-piece. The actor's mouth was blacked up to hide any human features.

The "sense organ" artifacts mounted on the Voord masks were of differing shapes. Most had circles at the tip of the aerial, but one of them, perhaps the taskforce leader, was distinguished by a triangle mounted at the end. Yartek had no device on his mask.

The Morpho brain-creatures were made to pulsate by air being pumped into them. The pressure was then changed inside them. Actor Heron Carvic delivered his dialogue by the use of a microphone (not pre-recorded).

During the recording of "The Velvet Web" two sets were used for the 'palatial' interior - one for the beautiful appearance, and one for the ugly. Barbara's point-of-view of the room as it truly is, was achieved by William Hartnell, William Russell and Carole Ann Ford looking and speaking directly at the camera. Both sets were built to the same layout. Designer Ray Cusick was keen to use real dead rats for the 'ugly' interior, but director John Gorrie objected.

William Hartnell (the Doctor) was absent from "The Screaming Jungle" and "The Snows of Terror".

The actor Edmund Warwick (Darrius) regularly doubled for William Hartnell during dangerous scenes, or episodes where Hartnell was not due to appear.

The stone idol in "The Screaming Jungle" was operated on a fixed pivot. Actor Bob Haddow was inside the costume, his arms emerging through two holes on either side of the idol to encircle the victim.

As a Keeper of the Conscience, Darrius wore a robe similar to Arbitan's, but dirtier.

Stock footage was used during "The Snows of Terror" showing wolves and a trapper's wooden hut. Stock sound was used of a wolf's howl.

The Ice Soldiers, for budget and design reasons, were not frozen into the block containing the micro-key. Instead, they stood motionless beside the block. The Ice Soldiers were 'real' people, and not made of ice. One soldier let out a human scream as he disappeared into a crevasse.

The split-screen technique used during the 'travel dial' sequences meant that the actor's immediate environment was black, even if this clashed with his background in the same scene only moments before. The actor/actress would vanish and reappear with a curious popping-sound.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

SERIAL "E" SIX EPISODES BLACK AND WHITE

"THE SEA OF DEATH"	-	11th. April	1964
"THE VELVET WEB"	-	18th. April	1964
"THE SCREAMING JUNGLE"	-	25th. April	1964
"THE SNOWS OF TERROR"	-	2nd. May	1964
"SENTENCE OF DEATH"	-	9th. May	1964
"THE KEYS OF MARINUS"	-	16th. May	1964

CAST

DOCTOR WHO.....WILLIAM HARTNELL
IAN CHESTERTON.....WILLIAM RUSSELL
BARBARA WRIGHT.....JACQUELINE HILL
SUSAN FOREMAN.....CAROLE ANN FORD

ARBITAN.....GEORGE COULOURIS
ARBITAN'S DOUBLE
JOHN BEERBOHM
ALTOS.....ROBIN PHILLIPS
SABETHA...KATHARINE SCHOFIELD
VOICE OF MORPHO..HERON CARVIC
LADIES IN WAITING.FAITH HINES
DAPHNE THOMAS
VERONICA THORNTON
SHARON YOUNG
LYNDA TAYLOR
DARRIUS.....EDMUND WARWICK
IDOL.....BOB HADDOW
HATCHETMAN.....MARTIN CORT
VASOR.....FRANCIS DE WOLFF
ICE SOLDIER....MICHAEL ALLABY

ICE SOLDIERS...ANTHONY VERNER
ALAN JAMES, PETER STENSON
EPRIN.....DOUGIE DEAN
TARRON.....HENLEY THOMAS
LARN.....MICHAEL ALLABY
SENIOR JUDGE..RAF DE LA TORRE
FIRST JUDGE.....ALAN JAMES
SECOND JUDGE....PETER STENSON
KALA.....FIONA WALKER
AYDAN.....MARTIN CORT
EYESEN.....DONALD PICKERING
GUARD.....ALAN JAMES
YARTEK.....STEPHEN DARTNELL
VOORDS.....MARTIN CORT
PETER STENSON
GORDON WALES

CREW

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT.....DAVID CONROY
ASSISTANT FLOOR MANAGER.....TIMOTHY COMBE
COSTUME SUPERVISOR.....DAPHNE DARE
MAKE-UP SUPERVISOR.....JILL SUMMERS
INCIDENTAL MUSIC.....NORMAN KAY
STORY EDITOR.....DAVID WHITAKER
DESIGNER.....RAYMOND P. CUSICK
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER.....MERVYN PINFIELD
PRODUCER.....VERITY LAMBERT
DIRECTOR.....JOHN GORRIE

BBCtv

COMPILED BY
GARY HOPKINS